



## HOUSING AND LAND USE SPECIAL COMMITTEE MEETING

Wednesday, March 24<sup>th</sup>, 2021 | 6:30pm

Visit [www.macgrove.org/participate](http://www.macgrove.org/participate) for Meeting ID # and password

**Please note: this meeting is being held remotely online via Zoom and will be recorded.**

### HLU Committee

Meg Arnosti (Secretary)  
Kate Baxter-Kauf  
Tom Dietsche  
Ann Dolan  
Eric Beck  
Mark Elliot  
Jack Fei  
Colin Fesser  
Tyler Giles  
Ross Gregerson  
Gene Johnson  
Jenny Krol  
Evan Hall  
Patty Hartmann

John Lee  
Kensey Lipstreuer  
Marc Manderscheid  
Kathy McGuire  
Mike Moore (Chair)  
Zuzanna Pakula  
Dave Pasiuk  
Cathy Plessner  
Nora Ptacek  
Art Punyko  
Cindy Racine  
Mike Sonn  
Brian Wagner  
Elizabeth Wefel

### Presenters/Applicants

David Loehr  
Michael Bell  
David Hovda  
Brian Alton

### Staff

Alexa Golemo

### 27 Guests

## MINUTES

Zoom Webinar (6:20 – 6:30 pm Tech Check)

- I. Welcome & Introductions
- II. Addition/Deletion of agenda items
- III. Approval of Minutes: February 2021 Meeting and March 2021 SPECIAL Meeting

**Motion by Dave Pasiuk. Seconded by Colin Fesser. Motion passes with vote of 21-0.**

- IV. 400 Mount Curve Boulevard Variance Application, *David Loehr, Property Owner*  
*Lot Size Variance Application for Lot 34 and 35: Proposed lot sizes of 4,366.5 sq. ft. for a variance of 633.5 sq. ft. for each lot.*

400 Mt. Curve Blvd. David Loehr. Original home platted 1927. Zoning has changed. Now 5000 sf minimum lot size but other properties do not have that amount. Plan to construct new home on 34, renovate the home on 35. Consistent with original zoning. 4366 sf each lot, consistent with other properties on the block.

Dolores Rairamo. Lived over 80 years on Mt. Curve Blvd. Does not want a building on the empty lot next to her. Their fence is already against her back steps. Building will impact her property. 8190 sf. 4099 sf.



Claiming part of the alley. Proposal is creative writing, but deceptive. They have not talked to the neighbors. Not off to a good start with the neighbors. Concerned about safety, air quality, water runoff.

Mike Sonn. In favor of variance. Fits the character of the street. West side has larger homes, eastern side has 41-foot lots.

Andrea and Marco Perzic... 378 Mt. Curve. They live on a lot which is the size of the proposed lots. It is suboptimal due to drainage. Should not be approved. There is no compelling reason to approve this. Map has been doctored. Proposal is deceiving. No communication with the neighbors.

Karen Sutherland. 464 Mt. Curve. Neighbors are opposed and many have written about this. Neighbors have invested 50 years to improve the homes on the street. 5 other lots that are in the same situation. This will set a precedent. Owners only bought the lot a few months ago.

Jack Fei. Never seen such an outpouring of negative comments in all his years on the committee. Does not see a case for why the lot should be split. Split does not benefit the neighborhood.

Tom Dietsch. Lives on West side of Mt. Curve. This would create a practical precedent. This request is for 87% of code. Developers will notice the decision on this lot. Other approved variances have been much smaller. Will vote against.

Ann Dolan. How is it our place to vote for a variance when the neighbors are opposed?

Mark Helgeson, 394 Mt. Curve, next door. Concerns about water runoff which is already very bad. This home will be massive, not in keeping with the neighborhood. 33 x 49.75 feet. 4 feet from the lot lines. 2 stories. Will dwarf other houses. Garage will need another variance. Worries about variance after variance. If we have zoning laws in place, why not adhere to them?

Marc Manderscheid. Neighborhood was platted 1917. First zoning in 1922. Standard lot is 40 x 120 or 125. This property would be 40 x 100, much smaller. This significant change does not warrant a variance.

Colin Fesser. We are not discussing variances for any structure. Just a lot split request. Not related to water, property boundaries, etc. Seems to fit requirements for variance. This would be the norm on this block. Practical difficulty does not seem to be met. Inclined to vote in favor. Worries that neighbors might submit a lawsuit.

Homeowner: Two platted lots are already in place.

Gene Johnson. Voting no because neighbors were not talked to.

Homeowner: Pandemic and cold weather have prevented conversations.

Kathy McGuire. Thanks to the neighborhood for your letters. Community Councils were developed for this purpose. This creates 2 non-conforming lots. Don't think this makes the situation better. Voting against.



Ross Gregerson. Shows map of the few properties with this lot size or smaller in Mac Groveland. Some at Hamline and St. Clair and this area on Mt. Curve.

Kate Baxter-Kauf. Relevant question is whether there are practical difficulties.

**Motion to approve variance request for lot size for the property at 400 Mt Curve Blvd (Kate Baxter-Kauf, Mike Sonn).**

*Motion fails 9-15 with 3 abstentions.*

**Motion to recommend denial of the variance for lot size for 400 Mt Curve Blvc (Tom Dietsche, Ann Dolan).**

*Motion passes 14-9 with 4 abstentions.*

- V. 1252 James Avenue Variance Application, *Michael Bell, Property Owner. Lot Coverage Variance Application: Proposed lot coverage of 43.5% with expansion of back deck and 3-season porch addition, for a variance of 2.8%. (Current lot coverage is 40.7%)*

Michael and Jamie (?) Bell. Requesting a variance for a 3-season porch. 40.7% lot coverage currently. Will be at 43.5%. Variance of 2.8%. Shows photos of architectural drawings. Jamie has had melanoma 3 times and currently cannot be outside to enjoy the space. Wants to fill in the empty spot that is not utilized currently.

**Move approval of the variance request for lot coverage for the property at 1252 James Avenue (Drew Nelson, Gene Johnson).**

Tom Dietsche asks about talking with neighbors. Homeowners have done so.

Colin Fesser. Likes the proposal. Looks reasonable. Is there a practical difficulty that requires this porch. Answer: More handicapped accessible with porch. Front steps are not accessible.

*Motion passes 26-0 with 0 abstentions.*

- VI. 1219 St. Clair Ave. Rezoning Application, *David Hovda, Hovda Properties LLC & Brian Alton, McClay-Alton P.L.L.P. Rezoning Application to rezone B1 local business to T3 traditional neighborhood*

David Hovda, developer. Brian Alton, attorney. Proposal to buy former Xcel sub station. Intends to build mixed-use commercial residential property. Needs rezoning from B1. Adjacent lot is owned by Clear Channel with billboard. In communication with Clear Channel about incorporating use of that space, possibly for parking. No plans yet. David Hovda has a purchase agreement subject to rezoning.

Mike Moore: Notes that billboard was falling apart before.

Jack Fei: Sounds like a better use of the land than today.

Attorney Brian Alton. B1 is the most restrictive business classification. T3 zoning is for mixed-use and allows flexibility for setbacks. Imposes design standards.



Gene Johnson. Grid 5 rep, lives in Wilder Park. Advises keeping the neighborhood involved. Especially the 400 people living in Wilder Park.

Julia Curry. 216 Griggs. In favor of this re-zoning. Parking is a concern. St. Clair is very busy and this is a hectic intersection. Entrance on St. Clair would need to be safe and not disrupt traffic.

Laura Wallace. 276 Griggs. Concerned about traffic, including pedestrian traffic to rec center. That corner is already very busy and hard to cross as a pedestrian. Would like to make sure that the neighbors are kept aware of where the egress for the building would be located. Is having a hard time imagining underground parking without an obstruction to traffic.

Mike Sonn. This it is a great project. Would like to have the billboard removed. Pedestrian safety bump-out was incorporated at the NW corner Syndicate and Grand.

Mark (last name?). Any development will increase traffic. Height will be a big issue. What is the plan for the height of the building?

Brian Alton: No specific plan. Height would be what is permitted. Do not plan to ask for variances or conditional use permits. There is a 3.0 floor area ratio and would limit construction.

Art Punyko. Pleased to read about the positives this rezoning could bring. Would like bump outs at pedestrian crossings. Will support.

Marc Manderscheid. RM2 Zoning surrounds this property. Would support RM2 as well. Coffee shop would be a terrible idea in this location. Look at Grand and Syndicate as a model. 10-ft+change in elevation means underground parking might work. Do not come back for variances.

Evan Hall. It is hard to understand the vision for the property. You will have to get a variance no matter what you plan to do. It would be helpful to have drawings.

Drew Nelson. Might provide traffic calming. Very supportive. City is in favor of re-zoning. Consider only housing, not retail.

Lindsay Schwab and Rob Zelada. Adjacent north of the property. Supports the rezoning. Has concerns about traffic. Could propose a stop light for kids trying to get to the rec center.

Kathy McGuire. This is not a designated transit node. Does not feel like it is part of a master plan. Voting against. It should be part of a plan. T3 does not seem to fit in this location.

**Move approval of rezoning application for the property at 1219 St Clair Ave from B1 local business to T3 traditional neighborhood (Marc Manderscheid, Jack Fei)**

Tyler Giles asks Kathy McGuire what other zoning would be better?

Kathy McGuire: When neighborhood study was done, it was decided this area be small residential and that T3 was not appropriate. T3 seems like an extreme jump and would prefer T1, T2 or RN3. Have we established that Mixed Use should be at this intersection?



*Motion passes 19-6 with 0 abstentions.*

**Updates**

235 Cleveland may be submitting an application for variances for loading from the street.

City has released a parking study with 2 options. Looking for community feedback. Transportation will consider the study and give to HLU. HLU will consider study and make a formal recommendation to the City. Two information sessions will be held by the City.

VII. Adjourn

Minutes by Meg Arnosti